

# Your NEW YORK STATE Extension Service



“To teach all of those  
things that are necessary  
for fuller and richer  
family living on the farm,  
in the home, and  
in the community -  
that is **EXTENSION**”

# People with a vision

I N OUR NATION progress is achieved through leaders who envision better ways of life and make their fellow men so conscious of those ideals that together they make their dreams come true. Out of such visions the Cooperative Extension Service was born. Its pioneers dreamed of a sound family farm life for their children and their children's children. The movement they created almost a half century ago has kept alive that vision.

Extension specialists and agents in New York State, working in cooperation with farmers, farm and city women, and youth, and backed by the research of the New York State Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics at Cornell University and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, are transforming the vision into better farms, better homes, and better communities.

In the future, as in the past, progress will come primarily from the application of science to agriculture and home-making. For centuries the farmer had to obtain most of his practical knowledge from his father, his neighbor, and through his own limited and often costly experience. Research got under way slowly but it has gained speed year by year.

A major requirement, if this research was to be effective,

involved simplification, localization, and interpretation to farmers and homemakers. The Cooperative Extension Service was assigned this job of translating into practical use the results of experiments by research workers and merging them with the best existing farming and home-making practices. Thus began a new type of teaching—teaching by showing people how, on their own and neighboring farms and in the homes. Extension calls it *learning by doing*.

### HELPING PEOPLE TO HELP THEMSELVES

There are now Extension agents in all agricultural counties of New York State. They receive a constant flow of factual information from Extension specialists of the New York State Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics at Cornell University and from the U. S. Department of Agriculture. They plan with local people, work through volunteer local leaders, demonstrate improved practices, help people to grow individually and to work together. They help them to help themselves.

Extension work, then, is truly cooperative. The U. S. Department of Agriculture, the State Colleges at Cornell, the county governments, and the people themselves—all of whom contribute money, time, and energy—are the cooperative groups. Moreover, the Extension Service works with all of the other groups, federal, state, and county—public and private—that serve agriculture and the home.

Extension's roots and strengths are with local people. Living among these local people, the county agricultural agent, the home demonstration agent, and the 4-H agent have stood by their side through drought and flood,

war and peace, depression and prosperity, ready with needed scientific information. They early recognized farming as both a business and a way of life. They have directed tireless energy toward teaching greater efficiency in production and marketing, better management, better health, more recreation, and greater beauty and culture in everyday living.

Extension specialists and agents teach by all methods, including demonstration in which men and women and boys and girls learn by personal participation. They organize boys' and girls' 4-H Clubs and women's home-demonstration units. They encourage and advise farm people in the organization of livestock associations and commodity groups. They encourage families to teach their neighbors, because the desire and need for information outruns even their tireless schedule of service. They encourage people to define and study their own problems and to list their most pressing needs. They take information and advice as well as give it. In learning from local people their most pressing problems, they lay the foundation for practical research by the Experiment Stations and for Extension programs that are developed to meet the needs. Thus science and the best local practices are merged.

Out of these efforts the shape of things to come is emerging: an even more efficient agriculture for our State and Nation, happier families in more comfortable homes, more participation in community life, and more pride in the American way.

***Better farms—***

***Better homes—***

***Better communities—***

# How your Extension Service is organized

**M**EMBERS of the Extension Service staff at Cornell University are members of the faculty of the New York State College of Agriculture or of the New York State College of Home Economics. Extension work is carried on by three groups coordinated by the Director of Extension: (1) the administrative staff, (2) the subject-matter specialists, and (3) the county workers.

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

The administrative staff includes the Director and Assistant Director and state leaders of county agricultural agents, home demonstration agents, and 4-H Club agents, and an administrative specialist.

This staff correlates the work with other agencies and assists specialists and agents in carrying out the program with state-wide and local groups.

## EXTENSION SPECIALISTS

The Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics at Cornell employ approximately 75 Extension specialists to assist in carrying out the program in the counties. They maintain close contact also with the staff members of the Experiment Stations of the University to obtain the results of research as rapidly as they become available. They assemble this material in popular form and transmit it to the county Extension agents.

## COUNTY EXTENSION AGENTS

The paid county Extension staff includes the county agricultural agents, associates, and assistants, the home demonstration agents, associates, and assistants, the 4-H Club agents, associates, and assistants, and a few other special agents. They represent the Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics at Cornell University and the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and are responsible for carrying on Extension work within the counties.

They help to apply results of research to local conditions and in turn transmit to the Colleges requests for study of specific problems. There are approximately 350 county extension agents, including county agricultural agents, associates, and assistants, home demonstration agents, associates, and assistants, and 4-H Club agents, associates, and assistants. There are county agricultural agents in 56 counties, home demonstration agents in 55, and 4-H Club agents in 54. In most counties the same agents carry on the Extension urban work along with the rural work. In Monroe and Onondaga Counties, however, there are separate urban programs in home demonstration work.

## COUNTY EXTENSION ASSOCIATIONS

The legally constituted local branches of the Extension Service are the county Extension Service associations. The local people, through their Association's Board of Directors, and in cooperation with Cornell University, determine programs and policies for agriculture and home-economics Extension work in the counties. Each of three departments of the Association has an executive committee which cooperates with the Director of Extension or his representative in the employment of County Extension Agents. The members of the three executive committees,

together with the association's president and one person from the county board of supervisors, constitute the board of directors of the association. They, in cooperation with the Director of Extension or his representative, outline the general policies of the association. In addition, they cultivate a relationship and understanding between the association, the county board of supervisors, and the Extension Service of the Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics at Cornell and approve employment of the Extension agents.

The executive committee of the agricultural department helps to lay plans, allocate funds, and in general to fit the program and policies to the needs of the agriculture of the counties.

The home demonstration department also functions under the guidance of an executive committee which helps to develop programs to fit local needs and allocate funds. The membership is organized in local units, with volunteer project leaders for the various areas of work and study. The leaders are trained for their jobs in county leader-training schools taught by the home demonstration agents and specialists.

***Extension—a  
cooperative venture  
in sharing***

The 4-H Club Department has its own executive committee and each 4-H Club is supervised by a volunteer local leader. The 4-H Club agents assist the leaders in planning. Assistance is available also from several 4-H Extension specialists in agriculture and home economics. This policy of local leadership makes possible a flexible program, adapted to local conditions and demands.



## LOCAL LEADERS

Ever since the earliest days, progress of Extension has been closely tied to the efforts of unpaid local leaders. Farsighted men and women have helped to develop the program and have pushed it forward in pace with changing times. In many counties, children and grandchildren of the first members are prominent in all phases of the work.

## STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL

In 1956 the State Extension Service Advisory Council was formed with representatives from each county association: the president of the association and the chairman of each of the three departments. The responsibilities of the Council include advising the Extension staff on current and long-range problems, serving as a liaison between Extension Service administration and county Extension Service associations, and assisting with developing and strengthening the work of the associations.

## SOURCE OF FUNDS

Financial support for the Extension Service comes principally from four sources: federal, state, and county governments, and from the members and friends of the Extension Service associations. The following table shows the sources of funds for Cooperative Extension work in 1956.

<i>Total Counties and State Colleges (percent)</i>		<i>County Work— Average of all Counties (percent of total)</i>		
		<i>Agriculture</i>	<i>Home Demonstration</i>	<i>4-H</i>
County Board of Supervisors	38	50	62	70
State	33	15	20	18
Federal	22	19	8	11
Non-Public	7	16	10	1
Total	100	100	100	100

Local people in the counties voluntarily pay membership dues because they like to feel they have a share in the organization and like to have a say in how things are run. The county Extension Service associations are financed largely from county appropriations and membership contributions. In the agricultural departments the dues range from \$2 to \$6, and from \$1 to \$1.50 in the home demonstration departments. There is no fee for 4-H Club membership.

Once each year the county agricultural agents and the county home demonstration agents work with volunteer leaders in the membership program for Extension work in the counties. During a membership drive, approximately 10,000 volunteers, unit leaders, and committeemen interview about 170,000 persons who have expressed an interest in Extension work. These people annually contribute approximately \$300,000 to help carry on the work in the counties.

## Extension work in the counties

**T**ODAY with less land under cultivation and fewer farms than when Extension work started, more food is being produced. Alert, progressive farmers have been quick to make use of modern developments in mechanization, better seeds, higher producing livestock and poultry, improved fertilizers and pesticides, better marketing methods, and more efficient use of labor and land. Farms in the state are larger but they still are family farms operated on a business-like basis.

## AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WORK

There may be some significance in the fact that the remarkable change in farming methods is coincident with the development of the Extension Service. It has kept in step with the changes by developing a program that deals with the farm as a unit and with efficient operation of the farm business, as well as with individual crop and livestock production and marketing practices. This calls for personal assistance to farm families in farm analysis and decision-making and in market expansion and efficient marketing methods. This expanded program is planned to help farmers and their families make more money, to have better living comforts on their farm and in their homes, and to get from farming and farm life some of the things they have always wanted.

The importance of national policy and its effect on farm income brings a need for intensifying Extension's educational program in the field of public affairs. There is much need today for the farmer to be fully informed on national economic trends and pending legislation, as well as on local public problems and issues.

While the full-time farm population has been decreasing in New York State, the numbers of families moving into non-farm rural areas has been steadily increasing. Often they engage in agricultural operations, such as Christmas-tree farming and other specialties. A considerable proportion of land formerly under cultivation is now being used for homes, camps, parks, and other recreational activities. Persons engaged in such part-time farming and the agencies operating the recreational facilities have requested help. This trend needs special consideration by the Extension Service.

In 1956 the membership in the agricultural department in the counties totalled approximately 65,000.

## HOME DEMONSTRATION WORK

The home demonstration department of the county Extension Service associations present their programs to rural and urban homemakers alike through local groups or units. This constitutes no problem since in these days the differences between farm homes and those in cities are slight.

More than 90,000 women, in cooperation with the home demonstration agents and the state staff, develop and determine unit programs. Volunteer local leaders do much of the teaching in the units. To prepare for this, they attend special training schools given by agents or specialists to gain knowledge about what to teach and how to teach. More than 21,000 of these leaders give freely of their time, energy, and talent to further the Extension program.

These 90,000 women gather in groups, large and small, to study the art and science of happy family living. Their interests are broad, extending to anything and everything that has to do with the family's health and welfare—from stretching the family dollar to proper food for their youngsters. They learn first aid for home accidents, how to cut corners on housework, to make and make over clothes, to plan family fun, to put something by for a rainy day.

Moreover, the program includes many other activities dealing with community service and civic responsibilities. A recent study of the benefits received by homemakers from participation in Extension activities brought out the fact that the women ranked development of leadership qualities and an awareness of educational and social values high on the list of personal gains.

Home-demonstration leaders and the Extension staff are planning long-term programs that will develop satisfying family life and an attitude of responsibility for community progress. The various aspects of home-eco-

nomics teaching will therefore emphasize the needs of families and communities.

#### 4-H CLUB PROGRAM

The principle of a project of useful work in agriculture or homemaking, carried to completion by each club member, has always been the philosophy underlying 4-H Club work. Although many of the projects the members engage in now are different from the "corn, calf, and canning clubs" of the early days, the basic idea has not changed.

General supervision of the projects and administration of the program are the responsibilities of the county 4-H Club agents and their associates and assistants. The local club leaders provide the leadership and the energy and enthusiasm without which the program could not move forward.

More than 56,000 members in 2883 clubs in the state and nearly 6000 men and women provide the necessary local leadership.

With isolation a thing of the past for the modern farmer, a need has arisen to train young people to take their part in group activities and in community affairs. This has brought about a type of project based on leadership, good citizenship, and community service, in addition to those based on skills in farming and homemaking.

The values of training in these fields, and of the "useful work" philosophy in general, have brought about an interest in 4-H Clubs on the part of many young people in town and suburban locations. This trend presents both a challenge and a problem which will need serious consideration in the near future.

***Times change—  
Extension meets  
the challenge***

### THREE-WAY PROGRAM PLANNING

Program planning takes place every year. Whenever possible the program is integrated in the interest of agriculture, home economics, and 4-H Club work. Each department has its own executive committee, but all have the same goals.

Success of the integration effort is illustrated in some counties by the combined training schools held by 4-H Club, homemaking leaders, and home demonstration leaders and the attendance of 4-H Club members at meetings held by the county agricultural agent. This cooperation assures future leadership for the adult organization as well as a continuing interest in Extension work.

## Extension teaching methods

THE METHODS that Extension uses to help rural people are as varied as the problems presented. Rarely is one method alone used. The Extension Service makes use of every possible way to get information to the people of the state.

### PERSONAL AND MASS COMMUNICATIONS

The demonstration method of teaching, on which Extension work was originally based, is still the keystone

of the structure. The how-to-do-it demonstration of a certain task, by a person who does it well, is one of the best ways to interest others in accepting new ways or modifying old ones. Result demonstrations are equally valuable in obtaining the interest and cooperation of larger groups. Tours use the result demonstration to call attention to new methods. The tour may cover several counties, or it may be a short visit to a home for study of a remodelled kitchen or a similar project.

Group gatherings, whether at a meeting or on a trip, provide an opportunity for those attending to talk over common problems and to exchange ideas. An important by-product of the group activity is the sense of working together. It carries over into many community affairs, and makes itself felt in the larger sense in the county and state programs. The leadership thus developed is one of the most valuable contributions of Extension.

The county Extension agents arrange meetings, schools, conferences, and make personal visits to homes and farms. During the busy crop seasons, they frequently hold twilight meetings for farmers. Most counties publish a monthly magazine that combines articles of interest to farmers, homemakers, and youth. Many of the agents have regular radio programs on local stations. In the past few years television has entered the Extension picture. Many counties produce TV programs regularly, and members of the Cornell staff appear from time to time on the stations.

Both the specialists and the county Extension agents prepare material for newspapers and magazines. They also provide bulletins, leaflets, motion pictures, slides, photographs, charts, exhibits, tape-recorded talks, and other educational materials for meetings, radio and television programs, and for other purposes.

## SPECIAL EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

Numerous schools and conferences are arranged each year for groups interested in all aspects of agriculture and homemaking. Many of these are held on the Cornell campus, others are regional and are arranged in accordance with local needs.

One of the most remarkable developments in Extension work in New York State is evidenced by the scope of these

### *A state-wide classroom*

conferences, institutes, and schools that take place each year on the Cornell campus. Many of them are concerned with problems relating strictly to agriculture or homemaking. Many others, however, are illustrative of the interdependence of rural

and urban people and of the part played by the Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics at Cornell in American life in our time.

Approximately 25,000 persons attend such schools and conferences each year. In addition to those of interest primarily to farmers and to women, the conferences bring together persons interested in widely separated fields, as this partial list indicates: New York State Institute for Public Welfare Training; Seed Growers Field Day; Fertilizer Manufacturers and Field Men; Bankers School of Agriculture and Graduate Bankers Agricultural Seminar; New York State Parent-Teachers Association Institute; New York State Community Theatre Association Annual Conference; Institute for Nursing Home Proprietors; Florists' Short Course; Cornell Turf Conference; Workshop for Commissioners of Social Welfare; School for Highway Superintendents, and School for Clerks for Boards of Supervisors.



The largest undertaking of this kind is the annual Cornell Farm and Home Week. This event has been held every year since 1908, except for two years during World War II. From 15,000 to 17,000 guests register during the five-day program. For weeks prior to the event, all departments in the two colleges seek ways to crystallize and visualize their work, so that the visitors may derive as much information as possible in a limited time. Both students and faculty strive to make Farm and Home Week a valuable and a pleasant occasion for their guests.

Extension specialists also take part in numerous conferences and schools in different parts of the State. Some of these are regional meetings, others state-wide. The field days held by the Vegetable Growers Association and the Empire State Potato Growers Association are illustrative of this type of Extension work. Each year there are tours to outstanding farms, trips to inspect research projects, or other activities.

The Extension staff assists in preparing numerous exhibits at the State Fair in Syracuse. Many counties send exhibits, both in agriculture and in home demonstration work, and the 4-H Club building presents many aspects of youth work.

#### FARM STUDY COURSES

The College of Agriculture at Cornell provides correspondence courses. These are free and available only to residents of the State. Such courses make it possible for farmers to study fundamental facts and latest developments in dairy and poultry production and in many other phases of agriculture. Moreover, many urban residents interested in becoming farmers have taken courses to become informed about the requirements for getting started in the business. Some, by this means, learn enough to know that farming is not for them.

## A glance at history

EXTENSION work in agriculture, under other names and in other forms, has long been a part of our American scene. As early as 1785, George Washington, farmer, and Benjamin Franklin, scientist, assisted in the formation of the Philadelphia Agricultural Society. The purpose of this organization was to import improved seed and livestock for the benefit of the members. Within a few decades, state, county, and community agricultural societies sprang up in many parts of our young nation.

The New York State Agricultural Society, formed in 1832, is still in existence, and meets once a year. Its object, according to its founders, was to "improve the condition of agriculture and household arts." State and county fairs developed at an early date and played an important part in spreading ideas and information.

The Farmers' Institutes, forerunners of the Extension schools of today, made their appearance about 70 years ago. The first one in New York State, in 1886, was at Cornell University. This meeting had a special resemblance to modern Extension, because Professor Isaac Roberts asked the farmers who attended for "suggestions and kindly criticisms of the Cornell Agricultural Department." And so began the "give and take" between the people of the State and their colleges.

From the earliest days of Roberts' administration, faculty members and outstanding students went forth from Cornell to "extend" the influence and help of the University to the farmers of the state. This effort had culminated in regular Extension schools, of one or two weeks' duration,

held in different parts of the state. So successful were they, that in 1894 the New York State legislature made the first appropriation—\$16,000—for the promotion of the work.

Long interested in the contribution made by rural women to family life and agricultural progress, Liberty Hyde Bailey drew them into the Cornell Extension program. In 1900, he invited Martha Van Rensselaer to come to Cornell as the first Extension specialist in home economics, although the title did not exist at that time. In a tiny office in Morrill Hall she began her challenging career which saw the establishment not only of the home demonstration work in the state but also of the New York State College of Home Economics.

#### YOUNG PEOPLE ENTER THE PICTURE

Meanwhile, work with young people was progressing. Boys' corn clubs were flourishing, and in 1896 began the formation of junior naturalist clubs in the rural schools of the state. Each club had an official charter. Leaflets, written by Cornell professors, were sent to the members. They, in turn, wrote letters back to the professors. In 1915, the corn clubs, the junior naturalists, and the Chemung County Achievement Club, which had evolved from an informal group of boys interested in woodworking and gardening, drew together into our present 4-H Club organization. This rounded out the Extension program, and the family unit was firmly established as the core of the Extension Service.

#### COUNTY AGRICULTURAL WORK

Extension work as we know it today was born near the turn of the century. In the cotton belt the boll-weevil was threatening the crop with destruction. Dr. Seaman A.

Knapp, sent to Texas by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in 1903 to investigate, set up local demonstrations of better cultural methods which would control the pest. This was followed in 1904 by the appointment of a county agent to carry on the work.

In New York State, an adaptation of the southern system was first tried in Broome County in 1911. The money for the undertaking was furnished by the Binghamton Chamber of Commerce, and the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad, and the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Similar work was begun in Chemung County early in 1912. The College of Agriculture at Cornell had no money to offer, but advice and encouragement were forthcoming. Specialists traveled to meetings by train and by horse-drawn buggies. They also prepared letters and bulletins on timely subjects.

In 1913, the state law was amended to permit counties to raise money for the general improvement of agriculture. The State Legislature voted \$600 a year for each county qualifying to receive such aid. In that year also, Sears Roebuck Company offered \$1000 each to the first ten counties to begin the work. Fifty-five agricultural counties had agricultural Extension Service associations with a membership of 45,000 by the end of 1918.

#### LAND-GRANT COLLEGES AND EXTENSION

The Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 had brought about in many states the establishment of colleges of agriculture which became known as the Land-Grant Colleges. The Hatch Act of 1887 provided money for experimentation and research, and so the foundation was laid for the Extension work which was to come. The Smith-Lever Act, enacted by Congress in 1914, created the Cooperative Extension Service. This legislation established a partnership between the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the

Land-Grant Colleges, and provided funds for the organization and operation of the Service. The work to be done was specifically described as "instruction and demonstrations in agriculture and home economics to persons not attending or resident of the colleges, and the printing and distribution of publications, and provision of other materials for such instruction and demonstrations."

Many states, led by New York, went a step further, and, by state legislation, created a partnership between the State Extension Service and the people of the state.

New York named Cornell University as agent for the state to govern the organization and to regulate the work of the Extension departments, and named the county associations as agents for the people.

*A heritage  
of progress*

#### HOME DEMONSTRATION WORK

A home demonstration agent was appointed in Erie County in 1914, with the program under the sponsorship of the Farm Bureau. Similar set-ups were developed in four other counties. During World War I, the work was established, with federal funds on an emergency basis, in 33 additional counties and two cities. When the federal funds were discontinued after the war, New York State again took the lead to provide means to continue the work. The constitutions of farm bureaus in 25 counties were broadened to include home demonstration work, and home bureaus were organized on a membership basis. County supervisors were persuaded to appropriate money to augment Smith-Lever appropriations and membership dues, as they had for farm bureaus. Three cities, Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse, organized without benefit of state or federal funds.

#### 4-H CLUB WORK

4-H Club work actually started in 1915, although the first 4-H Club agent was not appointed until 1919. The first county 4-H organization, called the *County Board for Junior Extension Work*, was formed in Rensselaer County in that year also. This Board included the county superintendent of schools, and representatives of the Farm Bureau, the Home Bureau, the Grange, and superintendent of schools of the City of Troy. Later more attention was given to a young adult program to bridge the age gap between 4-H Club work and full membership in the adult groups.

#### EXTENSION SERVICE ADVISORY COUNCIL FORMED

At the end of 1955 the county Extension organizations, which by law were known as county Farm and Home Bureau and 4-H Club associations, relinquished the federated arrangement which had existed for many years and dropped the names *Farm Bureau* and *Home Bureau*. The state law was revised so that the county organizations became county Extension Service associations.

The New York State Extension Service Advisory Council, an instrument to speak for all the county associations in advising with the Colleges as to the administration of the Extension Service, held its first meeting on July 31 and August 1, 1956. This council is composed of the presidents of the county associations, the chairmen of the agricultural, home demonstration, and 4-H executive committees, and one agent from each county association department; also, representatives of both the administrative staff and Extension specialists at the Colleges.

The Advisory Council Central Committee is a small working body. It is composed of an association president and three departmental representatives from each of five

districts of the state. These are elected from and by the respective district representatives on the council. Additional members of the Central Committee are the Director of Extension, the three agent leaders, two subject-matter specialists, and the presidents of the three associations of county Extension agents.

This committee meets several times during the year to carry on necessary business between the annual meetings of the whole council.

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